

Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) Compliance Report

07/06/2021

Overview

HEERF I:

Section 18004(e) of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act” or the “Act”), Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281 (March 27, 2020), directs institutions receiving funds under Section 18004 of the Act to submit (in a time and manner required by the Secretary) a report to the Secretary describing the use of funds distributed from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (“HEERF”).

Rush University is required to report an initial report within thirty (30) days of signing of the Certification and Agreement to the Department. Subsequent reporting requirements will be provided by the Department to complete future reporting requirements.

HEERF II:

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) was authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA), Public Law 116-260, signed into law on Dec. 27, 2020. The Notice of Proposed Institutional Eligibility Criteria for Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) Supplemental Aid to Institutions of Higher Education (SAIHE) Program can be found here: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/heerfieligibilitymemo.pdf>.

HEERF III:

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) is authorized by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), Public Law 117-2, signed into law on March 11, 2021. ARP funds are in addition to funds authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA), Public Law 116-260 and the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Public Law 116-136.

Acknowledgement

HEERF I:

Rush University signed and returned to the Department of Education the required [Certification and Agreement](#) on *April 17, 2020*. Rush University intends to utilize no less than 50% of the funding under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.

HEERF II:

Rush University intends to utilize no less than the designated allocation of \$341,881 of the funding to students under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA).

HEERF III:

Rush University received notification of the HEERF III funding on 06/08/2021. This is the initial 30-day reporting for the HEERF III funding.

Emergency Financial Aid Grant Allocation

HEERF I:

Rush University was allocated for [Section 18004 \(a\)\(1\)](#) a total of \$683,762 of which allocation a minimum student allocation of \$341,881 will be used to support Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students.

On May 7, 2020, Rush University received via the G5 system the intuitional minimum student allocation for the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students. Funds are requested from G5 as they are paid to students.

As of August 3, 2020 for the second 45-day report, a total of **\$341,881** has been awarded in the form of Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Student to **267** eligible students.

An estimated number of eligible students as defined under section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 based on the Spring 2020 census is 1721.

HEERF II:

Rush University was allocated for CRRSAA Section 314(a)(1) a total of \$1,008,068 of which allocation a minimum of \$341,881 will be used to support Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.

As of June 12, 2021, a total of **\$341,881** has been awarded in the form of Emergency Financial Aid Grants to **217** eligible students. This is the final reporting for HEERF II CRRSAA Section 314(a)(1) fund reporting.

An estimated number of eligible students based on the Spring 2021 census was 2,699.

HEERF III:

Rush University was allocated for ARP 2003(a)(1) a total of \$1,855,157 of which allocation a minimum of \$929,712 will be used to support Emergency Financial Aid Grants to eligible students who have incurred expenses associated with the disruption of their education due to coronavirus.

As of July 6, 2021, a total of **\$111,171** has been awarded in the form of Emergency Financial Aid Grants to **74** eligible students.

An estimated number of eligible students based on the Summer 2021 census was 2,266.

Methodology for Awarding

The methodology for awarding remained the same as with the previous rounds of funding with the addition of block grants made available to students to cover expenses that are a part of the cost of attendance that the students incurred due to their program being extended as a result of disruptions due to the coronavirus. Those students are identified by their program and notification provided to the Office of Student Financial Aid for processing. These block grants may be in addition to the annual amount of \$2,000.

On April 17, 2020 Rush University announced the application process to apply for Emergency Financial Aid Grants was available to assist students with unexpected expenses related to COVID-19. The “Student Emergency Assistance” application is a simple one-page application that has allowed Rush University to be responsive to immediate needs of students. Final award amounts will vary based on student request and supporting documentation provided not to exceed \$2,000 in the form of a one-time grant. Emergency assistance was available for the following categories of expenses:

- Expenses related to emergency travel (domestic or international)
- New technology/internet connection
- Temporary housing
- Storage and moving
- Food
- Childcare/eldercare
- Utilities

Communication

The U.S. Department of Education also requires Rush University to publish information about instructions, directions, or guidance provided to students concerning the Emergency Financial Aid Grants. Additional communication was distributed to encourage student to apply for emergency funding.

- COVID-19 Emergency Aid Relief was part of a broader communication and students were directed to the simplified process to identify their eligibility for CARES Act funding and other institutional resources. Initial notification was sent out to the student body via Rush University student email on Friday, April 17, 2020. This communication directed students to the web-based application to certify their financial hardship and expenses related to campus disruption due to COVID-19.
- Social media communication was published encouraging Spring 2020 graduates to apply before Friday, April 24, 2020 for full consideration.
- Students were notified of their application status via their Rush University student email. For students who were approved, additional information about what to expect in terms of the payment process was included.
- On Friday, May 15, 2020, additional communication from the Office of the President reminded students of the COVID-19 relief funding availability with a link to the online application.
- The emergency fund availability is highlighted in the monthly “Student Affairs Matters” newsletter for the months of February, March, April, and May 2021.
- The Office of Student Financial Aid has published a direct link to the application from the main financial aid page located online [here](#).

Future Reporting

Rush University has completed the final reports for the HEERF I & II funding. Rush University will adhere to the next reporting requirement as outlined by the U.S. Department of Education for HEERF III.